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ART AND PROGRESS

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Published by the American Federation of Arts
1741 New York Ave., Washington, D. C.

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$2.50 A YEAR

VOL. VI FEBRUARY 1915 No. 4

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF MUSEUMS

Does any one doubt today the educational value of museums? Yes, some State legislators, city fathers, boards of trade, and even, strange as it may seem, a few intimately connected with museums. Why? For the simple reason that the idea is comparatively new and has not yet been fully demonstrated. As Miss Louise Connolly says, in a report on this subject recently published by the Newark Museum Association, until quite lately three tendencies have to a great extent governed the development and conduct of most American museums, namely, hoarding, exclusive ownership and wonder. None of these tendencies is evil in itself, but in excess proves destructive. A museum which devotes its entire energies towards securing that which others can not obtain, and hoarding its possessions as a squirrel would nuts without regard to the value of the exhibits to those who view them, appeal-

ing more to curiosity than to intelligent comprehension, is a museum which has almost no educational value. Such museums Miss Connolly would classify as dead. The live museum, according to her convictions, is not only a growing plant and treasure house, but also an instrument of instruction, an up-to-date teacher, one who knows his material well and also its possible service to the public. She would have exhibits so selected and arranged that they would directly convey information—"teaching through the eye," as she puts it. Obviously, in such a museum the assistance of a trained guide would be less needful than in one where exhibits were classified, but not set forth in such way as to speak for themselves. All will agree that it is better to see with one's eyes than with one's ears, but it must also be admitted that occasionally a word will open blind eyes and point out the path leading to individual discovery. This is in a measure both explanation and answer to those who have of late quite violently complained that the public was being over-instructed by those zealous of increasing appreciation of art either by spoken word or printed essay.

Miss Connolly's report was compiled after a tour of the majority of the leading museums in the United States and undertaken at the instance of Mr. John Cotton Dana, Librarian of the Free Public Library of Newark and Director of the Newark Museum Association, with the object of obtaining not only the best information on the subject as a whole, but information which should be directly serviceable in formulating a policy helpful to the development of the Newark Museum.

It is interesting to note that Miss Connolly reports having found "a growing unanimity of energy among American museums engaging in actual educational work and an earnest desire on their part for coöperation to this end." This investigation was not limited to art museums, but in referring to the art department of any museum Miss Connolly makes this striking remark, "The art department," she says, "must profit the

city just in so far as the city's industries appreciate the economic value of beauty," going on to explain that "a lump of clay worth less than a penny, may, when transformed by the industry of the artisan into a bowl, be worth a dollar; when transformed by the artist into a beautiful bowl be worth many thousand dollars"—a truth applicable to some extent to almost all industries.

This is a timely warning and one to which wide attention should be called. Not only are we today in great need of appreciating this truth in order to take our place creditably among nations with regard to our commercial output, but in order to uphold the great traditions of art, in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Miss Connolly is the educational expert of the Free Public Library of Newark, and her report is of exceptional value, not only on account of its clearness and directness, but also because of the writer's long experience in educational matters and broad unprejudiced viewpoint.

LEE McCLUNG

The American Federation of Arts has experienced serious loss in the death of one of its directors, Mr. Lee McClung, which occurred in London, December 19, 1914. In 1912, while holding the position of Treasurer of the United States, Mr. McClung became treasurer of the American Federation of Arts—relinquishing this post only when leaving Washington and on the eve of an extended absence abroad. For three years he has served as a member of the Board of Directors, regularly attending the meetings and giving at all times liberally of his interest and aid. This was characteristic of the man. Whatever he did was done to the full extent of his power—hence, well. Of large capacity and capability he gave without measure or stint. Such giving on the part of one who represented, as did Mr. McClung, the highest and best type of American manhood and citizenship means much, especially in the field of art—strengthening

endeavor, dignifying and justifying its aims. The testimony of such lives is not lost; their influence continues beyond the narrow span of life, but they are those who can ill be spared and whose loss is lamented far beyond the time of their passing.

NOTES

THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL STATUE

Mr. Daniel Chester French has been commissioned to execute the portrait statue of Lincoln which is to be permanently placed in the Lincoln Memorial at Washington, now under construction. The fact that Mr. French was a member of the Federal Commission of Fine Arts might have seemed to have prohibited his undertaking this important work, but the truth is that Mr. French's term of service expires in the early part of 1915 and therefore this was not an obstacle.

Mr. French is without question one of the foremost sculptors of our day. His Milmore Memorial, "Death Staying the Hand of the Young Sculptor," his "Gallaudet Group," and his "Alma Mater" are among the finest works of the kind which have been produced in modern times. Furthermore, Mr. French and Mr. Bacon, the architect of the Lincoln Memorial, have for some years worked together, the latter designing the architectural setting for many of the sculptor's more recent works. The selection of Mr. French as the sculptor of this Lincoln statue would, therefore, seem peculiarly fortunate and proper.

A NEW MUSEUM OF ART FOR BALTIMORE

Baltimore is to have some time in the near future a Museum of Art. A short while ago one of its leading civic bodies called the City-Wide Congress appointed a committee to study the question of an art museum. The report of this committee strongly recommended such a movement. As a result a committee of ten, including representatives of all Baltimore art institutions, was appointed, and now the Baltimore Museum